



## **Committee on Public Works & Utilities and the Northampton City Council**

### Committee Members:

*Councilor Dennis P. Bidwell*

*Councilor William H. Dwight*

*Councilor David A. Murphy*

*(Vacant)*

### **MEETING MINUTES**

**Date: July 14, 2016**

**Location: City Council Chambers  
212 Main St., Northampton, Massachusetts**

1. **Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call:** At 7:52 p.m. Councilor Bidwell called the meeting to order. On a roll call the following councilors were present: Councilor Bidwell, Dwight, and Murphy. Also present were: Councilor Sciarra, O'Donnell, Carney, Klein, and LaBarge.
2. **Public Comment - None**
3. **Approve Minutes of June 27, 2016**

Councilor Bidwell noted that at the June 27, 2016 there was a robust discussion about the role of this committee in light of the fact that the Public Works Commission is in the process of being disband. A summary of the discussion is within the minutes of the June 27, 2016 minutes.

Councilor Dwight moved to approve the minutes of June 27, 2016; Councilor Murphy seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 1 Vacant.

4. **Items Referred to Committee**

#### **16.064 Petition to discontinue a portion of Elm Street - Referred to Committee on 5/5/2016**

This item was referred to the Planning Board. On May 12, 2016 they unanimously recommended approval. The Public Works Commission also discussed this item on June 29, 2016 and recommended approval.

Attorney Ed Ethredge filed a petition on behalf of the Smith College. Years ago in order to straighten out the street Elm Street was relocated further to the north. The gates which can be seen about 70 feet from Elm Street used to be on Elm Street. The College wants to move the gates closer to Elm Street. The College will be replacing the utilities at that location. Normally this would be the responsibility of the City, however, Smith College will assume responsibility if the discontinuance is approved.

Councilor Murphy moved to return the item to the full City Council with a positive recommendation; Councilor Dwight seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 1 Vacant.

**16.110 Petition to accept a portion of Pleasant Street/Route 5 - Referred to Committee on June 2, 2016**

Councilor Bidwell explained that the Planning Board gave a unanimous recommendation for approval of this item on June 23, 2016. On June 29, 2016 the Public Works Commission also gave a positive recommendation for approval.

Mayor Narkewicz explained that Mass DOT has had a standing offer to give a portion of Pleasant Street to the City. The proposed plan, however, had some issues, and a revised plan has the City accepting portions of Pleasant Street incrementally.

There are a number of issues that need to be worked out before the City will accept all of the areas being offered; the State is funding the roundabout construction; this project will need to be completed before the City accepts this section. There were also environmental concerns with some areas in the Pleasant Street area; the City is unwilling to accept any areas that are not "clean". The state completed an investigation of the land covered by this offer and reports that there are no issues.

The Mayor recommends accepting the portion of Pleasant Street before the Council tonight as there are a number of plans as part of the overall vision for Pleasant Street. The City can begin to add bicycle and pedestrian accommodations and public park space in this area. The DPW and the Planning Board support the acceptance.

Councilor Dwight notes that this is the gateway to the City and can be a person's first encounter to downtown. The City cannot do any improvements in that area right now because the State owns the roadway.

Councilor O'Donnell notes that the acceptance of this roadway helps with the pleasant futures vision that the City has. There is widespread neighborhood and community support for this. People are enthusiastic for the potential for Pleasant Street acting more as a gateway for the City. It would also allow the City to add parking spaces if needed.

Councilor Dwight moved to return the item to the full City Council with a positive recommendation; Councilor Murphy seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 1 Vacant.

**5. New Business - None**

- 6. Adjourn:** At 8:01 p.m. Councilor Murphy moved to adjourn the meeting; councilor Dwight seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 1 Vacant.

*Prepared By:*

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